

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2650

Introduced by Assembly Member Cardenas

February 23, 1998

An act relating to gang violence.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2650, as introduced, Cardenas. Gangs: schools: San Fernando.

Existing law provides for the rehabilitation and punishment of minors who have violated any law or ordinance. Existing law, the California Street Terrorism and Enforcement Act also prohibits participation in criminal street gangs, as specified.

This bill would acknowledge the effectiveness of the Communities in Schools of San Fernando program in establishing a truce with the gangs in that community and would express the intent of the Legislature to conduct a study of the overall effectiveness of the program in reducing gang-related crime in the community, as specified.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature hereby finds and
2 declares as follows:

3 (1) On February 6, 1997, the Centers for Disease
4 Control and Prevention issued a report confirming that

1 the United States has the highest rate of childhood
2 homicide, suicide, and firearms-related deaths of any of
3 the world's 26 wealthiest nations. Nearly 75 percent of
4 murders of children in the industrialized world occur in
5 this country.

6 (2) Furthermore, the report documents that younger
7 and younger children are becoming perpetrators of
8 crime as well as victims. Juvenile crime in the United
9 States is increasing at a much faster rate than adult crime.

10 (3) The number of juveniles between the ages of 11
11 and 17 years, the ages of youth responsible for 99 percent
12 of juvenile arrests, will increase 33 percent in the next 10
13 years.

14 (4) However, one program in particular has appeared
15 to make a substantial difference in one community. The
16 Communities In Schools of San Fernando program has
17 had a key role in establishing a gang peace treaty within
18 their community. This three-year treaty has been
19 credited with reducing gang-related homicides. It is
20 believed that other gang-related activities have also
21 decreased, but additional analysis is needed to verify the
22 full extent of this program's impact.

23 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to conduct a study
24 to better evaluate the complete impact the Communities
25 In Schools of San Fernando program and its peace treaty
26 has had on the participating areas with respect to the
27 reduction of gang-related crime. The purpose of the study
28 will be to identify the key elements of the program that
29 are responsible for this program's success for purposes of
30 creating similar programs in other areas of the state that
31 are experiencing gang-related problems.